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Joy Clifton to H A Hall, 16 March 1917

Perth

March 16th 1917

Dear Aubrey

Your wire was a surprise re the management of Woodbrook. I did not know until Mrs Meares told me (in Boans on Friday) that the manager had been drowned at Andover, she did not know any particulars. It does seem a pity the poor chap did not go to the war. Mr Henry told me he was afraid his manager might enlist. Woodbrook has been unlucky this year starting with the burning of the homestead. Well I pray the bad luck will not continue. I suppose you & Helen were not anxious to leave the Island. Most of our old friends thought it was a good idea, to put in the summer there, whilst you were waiting for something better to turn up, but Lord Byron thought that with your ability & other attainments you were worthy of something better. I can imagine Ernest liking the life, if he is not too tied down, fancy that part will be irksome. Do you know I think Ernest would have no difficulty now, if he wanted to enlist, after our friend [?Morley] being accepted. Who do you think walked into the house on Saturday I heard some one speak to Millicent at the gate & did not trouble to see who it was, then a voice calling "is any one at home" & I didn't bustle even then, just called out thinking it was one of the S P Cliftons & there was Nursie Godmother! I had given her up, she only arrived by the *Samarind* on the 8th inst, after leaving on Jany 31st. I'm sending you the paper with the account of her thrilling & narrow escape from a watery grave.

Nurse is very worried because she could not save any of the parcels she was bringing out to friends. I have promised to write Mrs Lodge & let her know the fate of the parcel Miss Helen Lodge gave her for "Strelley", the contents were, a coat & skirt for Joan, a Kitchener medal for Mr Lodge & an old Lodge brooch for Mrs Lodge (she was also bringing a little winter dress for Babs) Poor Nursie had nothing but what she stood up in when they arrived at Vigo (in Spain). Ger did not know her at first, she looks well quite rosy. Babs & I went & saw her off by the Kalgoorlie express.

Madge & Lily have been up at Kalamunda, with the Fergusons, when I was seeing them off, who should get into the train same carriage but [---] Hassell & her returned soldier Frank Anderson; he was at the Peninsular with her brother & escaped in a miraculous way Frank looks a fine stamp but oh he has had a fiery experience, I think he deserves such a lovable girl Ger & I were quite on our own, only Babs for the week end — then Nurse turned up, on Saturday, then Ger's sister Mrs A Y came to tea, went to the [? Trot] with him and spent Sunday with [several words missing] Ethel (Mrs A Y) is writing a book, on the South Eastern Natives, she has been collecting legends & making notes for years, she thinks it is a pity to let them be forgotten, she has a girl typiste, while in Perth. I have promised to try & have a day with her in Town, to help her with some shopping.

Ger went to Tambellup at Easter to see Eric & is satisfied to leave him where he is. Harold [?Latham] wants him to take charge of the farm & sheep until he returns from the war at a £1 per week it is only a small place & they have promised to try & give Eric a start on a place of his own, when they return from the war.

Georgia & Leslie were having a holiday in Albany. Ger saw Sam & Effie & thinks Anderton a very fine boy. Ethel told me about the Dodwells losing their baby boy a Miss Lyle had told her from Hedland. I do feel sorry for them the Dr would feel not being there to try & save his boy. Dorothy wrote & said they would be delighted to have us in the winter. But I seem rooted to Newcastle St. Well I must write to

Tita visits home when is [sic] wants some good food, she used to scorn my cooking says the kids are dirty & [?ungrateful] but in spite of all that seems to like it or has to say so. Angus Warburton is on his way to the Front. Nurse told us she put her foot in it. She met Blanche Warburton in Fremantle & didn't know which one she was & so asked her if the Halls were her cousins & wanted to know the news, she said B looked as if she could slay her.

It appears she is the 2nd or 3rd Warburton who has had a flirtation & a pretty strong one with her friend's husband Mr Horrocks, the said husband has departed for the Front.

I think we should try & make an architect of Madge she show much [---] for designing & planning The Derbyshires are making their eldest daughter one.

The school play was not a success, Lily was really the best actress, but the others did not play up to her. Lou was a success in her little play & even Lily said she looked very pretty. I'm sending the latest War news, which is cheerful.

Give my love to Helen & kiss the girlies for me & much for your dear self
Joy

I shunted Nellie Inglis off on to cousin Amy. I thought it was time she took a turn at entertaining them.